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Letter dated 18 January 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Following instructions of my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a working document prepared by Mexico regarding the situation in Haiti, with the kind request to circulate it as a document of the Security Council during the session concerning Haiti scheduled for Monday, 18 January 2010.

(*Signed*) Claude **Heller**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 18 January 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: Spanish]

Five days after the earthquake in Haiti, the state of the country's infrastructure has resulted in more than 100,000 deaths, while many more people have been injured or otherwise affected.

Mexico notes with concern the total extent of the devastation, with hospitals, schools, churches and government buildings in ruins and tens of thousands of people on the streets without shelter.

In Port-au-Prince, the provision of basic services such as water and electricity has almost completely broken down. The medical facilities are overwhelmed and, in many cases, no longer functioning.

In response to this situation, the international community has mobilized to provide financial and in-kind resources for emergency humanitarian assistance, in an expression of solidarity and cooperation unparalleled in other recent natural disasters.

The Security Council must now ensure that this mobilization continues for as long as is necessary and, once the emergency phase is over, focus efforts on the reconstruction and sustainable development of Haiti.

1. The situation on the ground, however, is not under control, despite the efforts of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the troop assistance provided to the Haitian Government by the United States of America. This conclusion is based on the following main observations:

(a) In the absence of a central authority to coordinate the provision of assistance to the civilian population, looting has already begun and can only lead to worse outbreaks of violence;

(b) As bodies are still lying unburied in the streets, an uncontrollable health emergency will occur within hours;

(c) As the hours pass, it is becoming less likely that those victims still trapped under the rubble of collapsed buildings will be brought out alive. The death toll and the risks to public health will therefore continue to rise;

(d) The Haitian Government and all State institutions lack the basic infrastructure to ensure the country's governability and it is not feasible to expect that they will regain control in the near term;

(e) The risk of violence, together with the displacement of the population, will inevitably drive people to seek refuge in neighbouring countries, giving rise to a situation that could jeopardize regional peace and stability;

(f) Given the scale of the damage, it will be impossible to normalize the humanitarian situation if the response to this emergency is based on methods that have been inadequate even in less serious situations.

2. We, the Member States, must ensure that the United Nations has the means to discharge its responsibility. While Mexico commends the efforts made and the steps taken to date, much more is required in order to deal with this disaster.

3. The Security Council, as the body with primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, must play its proper role. In this context, the Security Council might consider adopting the following measures:

(a) Examine the mandate of MINUSTAH in order to align it with current needs, based on the evaluation contained in the Secretary-General's report:

(i) MINUSTAH has three pillars: helping ensure a secure and stable environment; supporting the political process; and promoting and safeguarding human rights. Today we must focus on the first pillar;

(ii) During this initial phase, the task of the United Nations and MINUSTAH will be to save as many lives as possible. In addition, the three million people who have been affected will require a coordinated response plan for assistance to meet their basic needs: food, health, protection, education and housing. Achieving these objectives will depend on our ability to restore State authority;

(iii) To do that, the Security Council must, in the short term, adjust the work done by MINUSTAH in the areas of reconstruction, humanitarian assistance and maintaining stability and security in Haiti;

(iv) In particular, it will be important to strengthen the Mission's activities in the following areas: assist in re-establishing and maintaining public safety and public order; and focus its efforts on reducing community violence;

(v) At present, the work of MINUSTAH should be divided into two separate phases: emergency response and reconstruction. The Group of Friends of Haiti, or a smaller group, should monitor the implementation of the MINUSTAH mandate;

(b) The presence of United Nations system entities in Haiti should be restructured and strengthened in close coordination with donor and troop-contributing countries.